



# Complaints and Constructive Conversations

## Programme overview

One of the hardest parts of being an elected member is dealing with complaints and angry or irrational people. Trolling and online harassment can start to feel like part of the job. When a citizen approaches you with a complaint and it's framed as criticism, it can be hard not to take it personally and dismiss it out of hand.

Through discussion of real life stories, experiences and questions you have as an elected member, this course is intended to help you develop skills that will assist you to deal calmly and sensibly with people who may not be behaving that way themselves, and to learn how to keep your ears open for their issues at the same time.

## Topics

- › Active listening
- › Finding common objectives as a means to solve problems
- › Understanding the systems available to you and your citizens, and helping them get results
- › Two sides of the story
- › Setting boundaries for other people's behaviour
- › Remembering to look at the context
- › What to do when things go badly wrong

## Target audience

Whether it's your first term or you're an experienced elected member, your attendance at this course will benefit you and your colleagues.

## Learning outcomes

By the end of this workshop you will have:

- › increased confidence in your ability to deal with stressful situations;
- › tips for ways to get swift results for chronic problems;
- › experience in practicing the technique of 'active listening'; and
- › learned how you can say 'no' and not lose the next election.

## Workshop fees

\$625 per person, excl. GST

## Workshop timings

9am – 4:30pm\*

\*This course can be run over a half or a full day, and can be tailored to specific council situations.